

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 OMB-01 SCCT-01 /076 W

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R 250941Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1646

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC

CONFIDENTIAL MANILA 3776

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, XF, RP

SUBJECT: MARCOS INVITES MUSLIM DISSIDENTS TO APRIL 17

MEETING IN ZAMBOANGA

REF: A.MANILA 3753

B. MANILA 3709

BEGIN SUMMARY: ON MAR 24, PRESIDENT MARCOS INVITED MUSLIM DISSIDENT LEADERS INCLUDING MNLF TO MEET WITH GOP REPRESENTATIVES ON APRIL 17 IN ZAMBOANGA. PRESIDENT CLAIMED ZAMBOANGA PARLEY WILL CONSTITUTE CONTINUATION OF JIDDA TALKS. MARCOS HAS INSTRUCTED EXEC. SEC. MELCHOR AND FON SEC ROMULO TO PREPARE REPLY TO AL-TOHAMY LETTER OF MAR 19 (REF B). MARCOS' CURRENT TACTIC SEEMS TO BE TO TRY TO DIVIDE MUSLIM DISSIDENTS ALTHOUGH EXERCISE IS PATENTLY CONTRIVED AND UNLIKELY TO IMPRESS. END SUMMARY.

1. AT CONCLUSION OF 3-HOUR SESSION WITH TOP ADVISORS

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MAR 24, PRESIDENT MARCOS EXTENDED AN INVITATION TO LEADERS

OF "ALL" REBEL MUSLIM GROUPS TO MEET WITH GOVERNMENT REPS IN ZAMBOANGA AT 10 A.M. APRIL 17. PRESIDENT GUARANTEED SAFE CONDUCT TO AND FROM CONFERENCE SITE. MARCOS SAID THERE NO AGENDA FOR CONFERENCE AND PROMISED TO LISTEN TO "ALL SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS." PRESIDENT HAS INSTRUCTED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND MILITARY TO CONTACT REBEL REPS AND FACILITATE THEIR JOURNEY TO CONFERENCE. PRESIDENT MADE SPECIAL POINT OF STATING HE WAS NOT ACCORDING SPECIAL STATURE OR PRESTIGE TO MNLF AND EMPHASIZED THAT MUSLIM LEADERS OPPOSING MNLF ALSO PARTICIPATING IN ZAMBOANGA CONCLAVE. HEAD OF GOP "CONVERSATION TEAM" STILL NOT CHOSEN BUT MARCOS SAID IT MIGHT BE MUSLIM GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL.

3. MARCOS TERMED ZAMBOANGA MEETING EXTENSION OF JIDDA TALKS AND CONSONANT WITH RESOLUTION 18 OR THE FIFTH ISLAMIC CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS IN KUALA LUMPUR 1974. HE ALSO INVITED AL-TOHAMY TO OBSERVE DIALOGUE.

4. PRESIDENT INSTRUCTED EXEC. SEC. MELCHOR AND FON.SEC. ROMULO TO REPLY TO AL-TOHAMY'S LETTER ENCLOSING MNLF'S CONDITIONS FOR SECONF ROUND TALKS INCLUDING PRECOMMITMENT TO AUTONOMY (REF B). HE MADE CLEAR HE REJECTED DEMAND FOR AUTONOMY; HE ALSO REITERATED IN SCATHING TERMS THAT MNLF ONLY ONE OF REBEL GROUPS IN SOUTH AND COULD NOT PRETEND TO SPEAK FOR ALL REBELS. PRESIDENT'S DENIGRATION OF MNLF ECHOED BY OTHER PHILIPPINE LEADERS AND PHILIPPINE PRESS WHICH HAVE SUGGESTED IN ADDITION THAT NUR MISUARI AND OTHER HIGH LIVING MNLF LEADERS ABROAD ARE SPLIT FROM HOME-BASED MNLF LEADERS.

5. COMMENT: IT WOULD APPEAR MARCOS MAY BE CONTEMPLATING SUBSTITUTING HIS PROPOSED ZAMBOANGA TALKS FOR ALL REBELS FOR JIDDA TALKS WITH MNLF, AT LEAST FOR APRIL ROUND. AT SAME TIME, IT IS APPARENT HE IS ATTEMPTING TO FOSTER IMPRESSION OF (1) DIVIDED MUSLIM REBELS AND (2) GREATER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN GOP AND REBELS OUTSIDE MNLF CAMPS. ALTHOUGH MOVE MAY ALSO REPRESENT EFFORT TO DRIVE WEDGE BETWEEN MNLF AND ITS SUPPORTERS HERE AND ABROAD, TACTIC IS SO PATENTLY CONTRIVED THAT WEDGE LIKELY PASS THROUGH

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